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Message Text

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APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY
NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.
S/S - JLHOGANSON
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O 110315Z APR 76 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 087614

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, EG, US

SUBJECT: LEBANON

REF: CAIRO 4781

1. PLEASE CONVEY TO MUBARAK THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM ME TO SADAT IN RESPONSE TO THE LATTER'S MESSAGE CONTAINED REFTEL.

2. THE SECRETARY APPRECIATED VERY MUCH HEARING FROM PRESIDENT SADAT ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF LEBANON THAT HAS PREOCCUPIED US SO MUCH OF LATE. PRESIDENT SADAT, IN HIS MESSAGE, SUGGESTED THE IDEA OF A SYMBOLIC FORCE FROM NEUTRAL ARAB STATES, AND THE SECRETARY WANTS HIM TO KNOW THAT THE U.S. HAS AN ENTIRELY OPEN MIND ON SUCH A POSSIBILITY. IF THE ARAB STATES THAT WOULD BE INVOLVED IN SUCH A FORCE WERE TO GIVE THEIR SUPPORT
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TO THE PROPOSAL, AND IF THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES WERE

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RECEPTIVE, WE BELIEVE IT COULD BE OF VALUE.

3. PRESIDENT SADAT MAY WELL HAVE NOTED IN RECENT DAYS REPORTS OF SYRIAN MILITARY MOVES RELATED TO LEBANON. WE HAVE HAD SOME REPORTS INDICATING THAT RELATIVELY SMALL UNITS OF SYRIAN MILITARY HAVE CROSSED INTO LEBANON

AT ONE OR TWO POINTS, BUT IT APPEARS THAT THEY HAVE REMAINED IN THE FRONTIER AREAS. THIS HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY THE CASE AT THE POINT WHERE THE DAMASCUS - BEIRUT ROAD CROSSES THE BORDER. WE HAVE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE SYRIANS INTENDED THE MOVES AS A SHOW OF FORCE IN THE INTERESTS OF MAINTAINING INTERNAL SECURITY DURING THE CRITICAL PARLIAMENTARY SESSION ON APRIL 10 AND PERHAPS AS AN INDUCEMENT TO THE LEBANESE FACTIONS TO COOPERATE IN THIS SESSION. WHATEVER THE SYRIAN MOTIVES MAY HAVE BEEN, WE ARE GRATIFIED THAT THE SESSION WAS HELD WITHOUT INCIDENT AND THAT THE PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS TOWARD A SOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL PROBLEM SEEMS TO HAVE GOTTEN UNDER WAY. AS WE HAVE COMMENTED TO PRESIDENT SADAT ON PAST OCCASIONS, THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE THAT THE SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON DIMINISHES RATHER THAN INCREASES IS FOR THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES TO COOPERATE ACTIVELY IN SOLVING THEIR INTERNAL PROBLEM, MAINTAINING THE CEASE-FIRE WHILE THEY DO SO. THE APRIL 10 MEETING OF PARLIA-MENT SEEMS TO US TO CONSTITUTE A GOOD START IN THIS DIRECTION. THE USG REMAINS OPPOSED TO SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION.

4. THE SECRETARY SENDS HIS WARM REGARDS TO PRESIDENT SADAT AND TO FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY. KISSINGER

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To: CAIRO BEIRUT DAMASCUS
Type: TE
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